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1/2 JUNE FREE

W I Z A R D S
P R E S E N T S

THE



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THE MAXXTM

FEATURES



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While it goes against all conventional mathematical wisdom that one-half is equal in any way to a whole, there's no question that there's a whole lot of entertainment in this special issue of *Maxx* #1/2. One of the beauties of the book is the ability of Sam Kieth and Bill Loeb to bring *The Maxx* to life, both in words and pictures. That, I must say, is something they have accomplished to perfection in this issue. So why are you wasting time reading this letter? Instead, read this quasi-origin of *The Maxx*. When you're done, make room in your collection for this issue, between *Maxx* #1 and the forthcoming *Maxx* #0.

Enjoy!

The Maxximum Cheese,

Gareb S. Shamus

WIZARD



MAXX-IMUM EXPOSURE

Sam Kieth discusses the current and future status of his latest creation

Sam Kieth is taking his career to *The Maxx*. The busy artist, who has worked on such characters as *Sandman*, *Wolverine*, and *The Hulk*, has drawn rave reviews for the debut of his latest title. Before *The Maxx* debuted in *Darker Image*, Kieth took a few moments to talk about the strange details of his new series with *Wizard* writer Andrew S. Harris.



WIZARD: Tell us about this dream world that *The Maxx* lives in.

KIETH: *The Other World* will be like the Australian outback, but it will be like the Australian outback on acid or some other really weird drug. He has these hallucinations of these strange creatures, called Izzes, that look like lemmings would look like if they ate things—they've got these big, nasty-looking teeth. They're just these little guys, though, but when they're all together they're pretty strong, and in this hallucination world in the dreamtime they're just starting to come out. They're sprouting from the ground with these hands that are trying to pull him down, and then eventually we get to see them.

WIZARD: What about the real world? How does he see it?

KIETH: Well, sometimes he sees things normally and sometimes he sees things differently from everyone else. It all has to do with this spiritual connection to the dream world. In the hallucination, the social worker is like a leopard queen—like a prehistoric woman wearing skintight outfits. He's wearing clothes, and she's naked as a jaybird. But in this dream world he's like her spirit animal, which is something that the Indians used to believe in. They believed that a spirit animal is sent to help a person out in their life—a coyote, a wolf, or a bear—and whenever you saw that type of animal [in real life] it would be significant. What animal *The Maxx* is is a mystery that we find out later on, but he thinks he's her spirit animal. He's afraid because he has these crazy dreams—he knows he's a normal guy under the mask, but he keeps thinking he's going to take off the mask and have the head of this animal.

WIZARD: So that's a mask, and not his real face that we've seen in the previews.

KIETH: Actually, it's not a real mask, either. *Maxx*'s

mask in the real world is alive, like a little creature sitting on his face, that's connected to the spirit world. Anytime that someone tries to take off the mask, it bites their fingers off. People think that it's Maxx biting the fingers off, but it's really the mask, and that's one of the reasons people think he's crazy.

WIZARD: What is that spike thing coming out of his hand? Is that a bone?

KIETH: That's his middle finger. It's a claw, so when he makes a fist he has to give you 'the finger' because he can't bend it. Good taste is long behind. Good taste is history (laughter). I'd like for him not to have it, but that's the way he is. He just happens to have a middle finger that's a claw. Hey, it could happen.

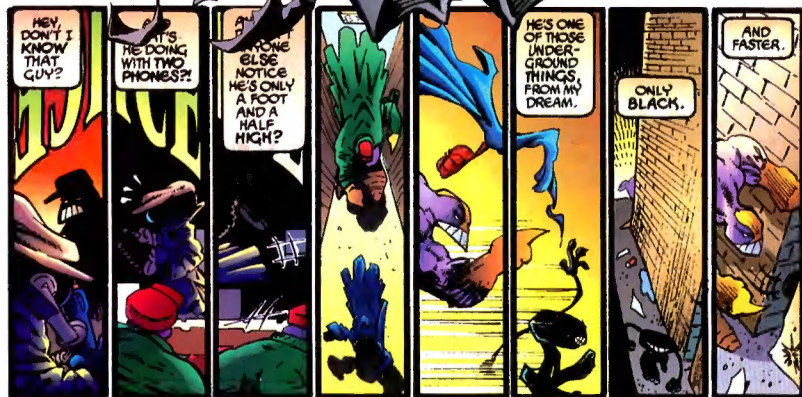
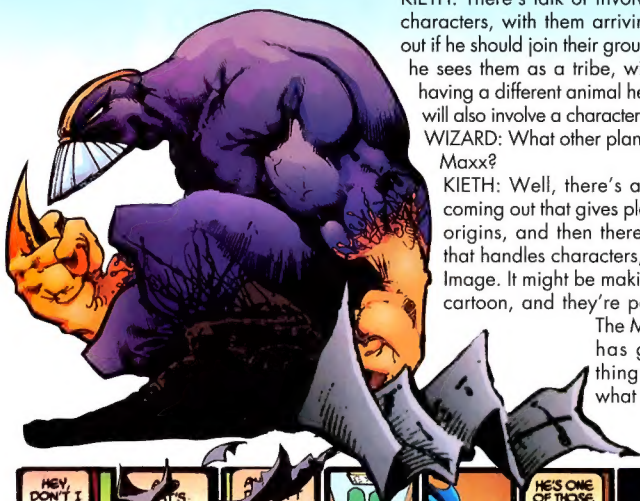
WIZARD: Is this book going to cross over with other Image titles?

KIETH: There's talk of involving the Youngblood characters, with them arriving and trying to find out if he should join their group. In his hallucination, he sees them as a tribe, with each one of them having a different animal head. One of the issues will also involve a character from Savage Dragon.

WIZARD: What other plans do you have for The Maxx?

KIETH: Well, there's an Image card series coming out that gives plenty of hints about his origins, and then there's this talent agency that handles characters, that kind of stuff, for Image. It might be making a Savage Dragon cartoon, and they're possibly talking about

The Maxx, too. Rob Liefeld has got this Hollywood thing going, so we'll see what happens. ☆





MY DAD
SAYS HE'S A
MONSTER! A
PSYCHO!

WELL, MY **MOM**
SAYS HE'S A **WORKING**
CLASS HERO! AN **AVENGER**
BRINGING **MAXIMUM**
JUSTICE! THAT'S WHY
THEY CALL 'IM...

by
SAM KIETH!
with
BILL MESSNER-LOEBS
script

MIKE HEISLER
letters

STEVE OLIFF
& OLYOPTICS
colors





I THINK HE'S
A **SPACE ALIEN!**
HIS WHOLE PLANET
WAS KILLED OFF BY
SPACE PIRATES AN'
WHILE HE WAS
FIGHTING THEM HE
CRASHED ON
EARTH!

"SUPPOSE HE WAS A GUY
WITH A CRAPPY JOB AN'
NO FUTURE - LIVING OUTTA
A FURNISHED ROOM...
SUPPOSE ONE DAY HE
FOUND A MASK...

"AND WHEN HE
SLID IT ON, IT HIT
HIS BRAIN LIKE
LIGHTNING!

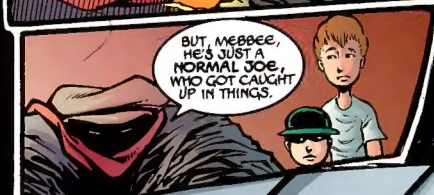


NAH. I BET HE'S
A **ARTIFICIAL**
BEING CREATED IN
A SECRET GOV'MENT
EXPERIMENT! WITH
PLASTIC MUSCLES
AN' **STEEL**
BONES!

"HE WOKE UP IN A PLACE
THAT WAS SORTA LIKE
AUSTRALIA, AN' SORTA
LIKE TH' BEGINNING
OF TIME. AN' HE WAS
A HERO THERE, WITH
A COSTUME AND THE
STRENGTH OF TWENTY
MEN!



WELL,
MEBBEE.



BUT, MEBBEE,
HE'S JUST A
NORMAL JOE,
WHO GOT CAUGHT
UP IN THINGS.



WHO'S IN
OUTTA HIS
DEPTH.

BUT
HOW COME
HE'S SO **BIG**
THEN? AN'
SO **TUFF?**

"BUT WHEN HE CAME
BACK TO THIS WORLD,
HE WAS TRAPPED IN
THE MASK AN' HIS OLD
LIFE WAS GONE!"



WELL... I
GUESS THAT...
COULD'VE
HAPPENED.

BUT HOW
DID HE GET HIS
CLAWS THEN, IF
HE WASN'T A
GOV'MENT
EXPERIMENT?

HE GOT
THEM IN THAT
SAVAGE
DREAMLAND.

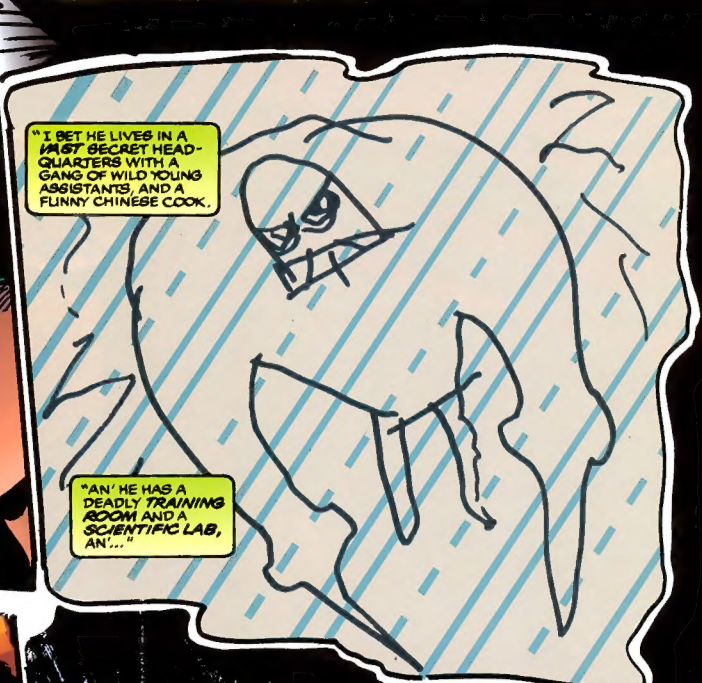
"HE THRUST HIS
HANDS INTO
BOILING LAVA..."

"AND WHEN THEY
CAME OUT THEY
WERE CHANGED...!"

"MADE INVULNERABLE,
STAINED AND TEMPERED
BY THE SULPHUROUS
ROCK...."



Hmm. I LIKED
THE ALIEN STORY
BETTER.




"I BET HE LIVES IN A
MIST SECRET HEAD-
QUARTERS WITH A
GANG OF WILD YOUNG
ASSISTANTS, AND A
FUNNY CHINESE COOK.

"AN' HE HAS A
DEADLY TRAINING
ROOM AND A
SCIENTIFIC LAB,
AN'..."



NAH,
KENT. YOU
KNOW THAT'S
NOT REAL
ENOUGH!



"ALL REAL HEROES
ARE TORMENTED
LOWERS! HE LIVES
IN THE SEWERS
AND EATS STOLEN
LINGUINE!"

"AN' EVERY NIGHT
HE ARISES FROM
HIS OWN GRAVE
T' FIGHT CRIME
WITH HIS MAXXI-
CYCLE AN' MAXXI-BELT...!"



SOUNDS GOOD, BUT I THINK HE'S JUST ANOTHER HOMELESS BUM, LYING IN DUMPSTERS AN' DRIFTIN' FROM SHELTER...

"HE CAN'T HOLD DOWN A JOB AN' HE'S GOT NO REAL FRIENDS HE CAN'T EVEN TELL SOMETIMES HOW MUCH OF THE LIFE HE LIVES IS REAL, AN' HOW MUCH IS THE DREAMLAND..."

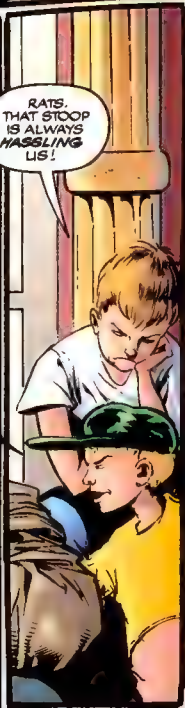
"HE TRIES TO DO GOOD, BUT MOSTLY HE BREAKS THINGS AN' SCREWS UP..."

NAH, THAT'S
TOO MUCH **DOWNER**
MISTER! I THINK HE'S
GOT A **CRB** OF **FEAR**,
AN' HE LIVES IN A
FORTRESS OF
SHADOWS...



OH, GEEZ!
LOOKIT, KENT!
IT'S JERRY
THE **CRACK**
HEAD!

RATS.
THAT STOOP
IS ALWAYS
HASSLING
US!

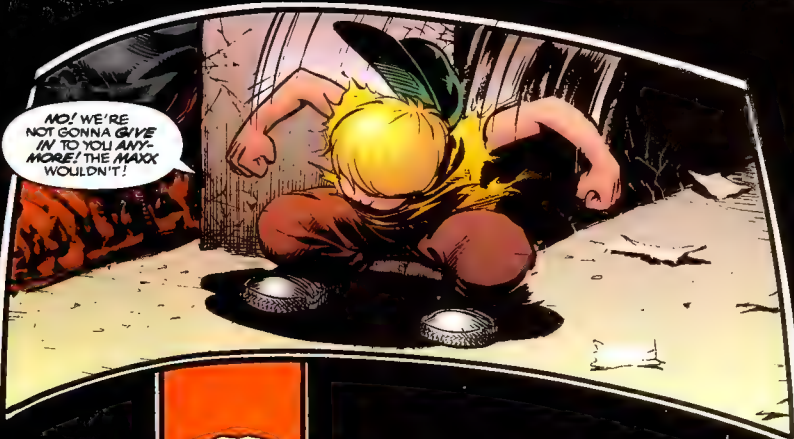


HI-YA,
KEEDS. 3 KOFF:
3 HOFF: GOT
ENNY THIN F'R
OLE JERR?

Um...NO.
WE DON'T HAVE
ANY MONEY
TODAY, JERRY.
HONEST.

THAT'S
RIGHT, WE'RE
BROKE.
WE...





NO! WE'RE
NOT GONNA GIVE
IN TO YOU ANY-
MORE! THE MAJX
WOULDN'T!

WHAT
CHOO GONNA
DO, KEEB?
:KAAK?:
TALK ME
T' DEATH?

YEH...
:HAFFK?:
RIGHT. LISSEN,
PUNK. SMART-
MOUTH KIDS
DISAPPEAR
IN THIS
NEIGHBORHOOD...

I'M
COUNTIN'
TO THREE,
THEN I
MUSS
YOU UP!

ONE...

MAYBE I GOTTA
KNIFE IN MY POCKET...
MAYBE I KNOW WHERE
Y' SLEEP AT NIGHT...

TWO...

I C'N KILL
YOU... I C'N KILL
Y'R FOLKS... I
C'N... I... I...

THREE!






HARRY!
KENT!
SUPPER!



GET IN HERE
AND WASH YOUR
HANDS, YOU TWO...
AND STOP HANGING
AROUND THAT
OLD BUM!




"AW, WE WAS JUST
TALKING, MOM.
WHAT'S COOKING?"



"SLOPPY JOES
AND PEANUT
BUTTER
SHAKES. DO
YOU LIKE
THAT, HARRY?"

"YES'M."



"GOOD. AND THEN
I WANT YOU TO
DO YOUR
HOMEWORK."

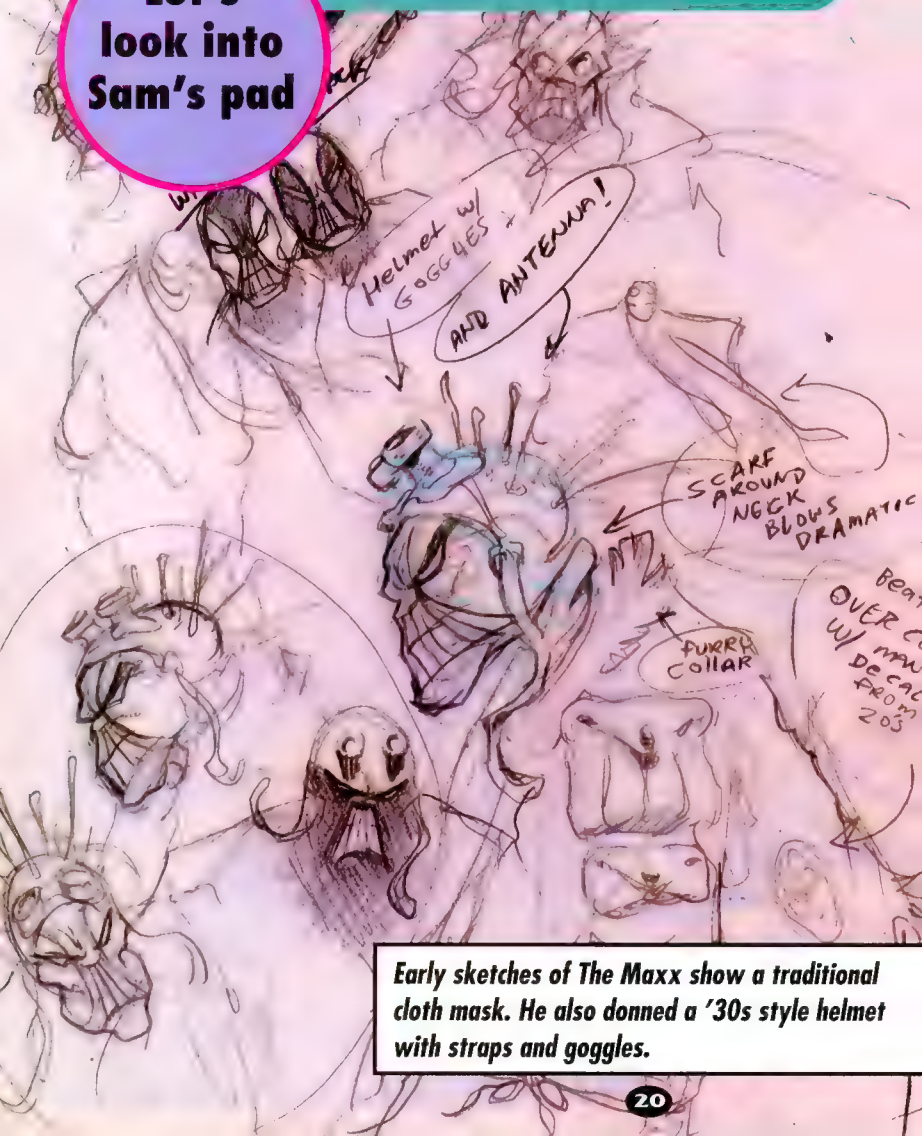
"AW, MOM,
D'WE HAVE
TO?"

"YES, YOU
DON'T WANT
TO END UP
OLD AND
ALONE ON
A CURB
SOMEWHERE,
DO YOU?"

ARTIST'S

sketchbook

Let's
look into
Sam's pad



Early sketches of The Maxx show a traditional cloth mask. He also donned a '30s style helmet with straps and goggles.



**THE
MAXX'S
ORIGINAL
JAW WAS
HUGE!**

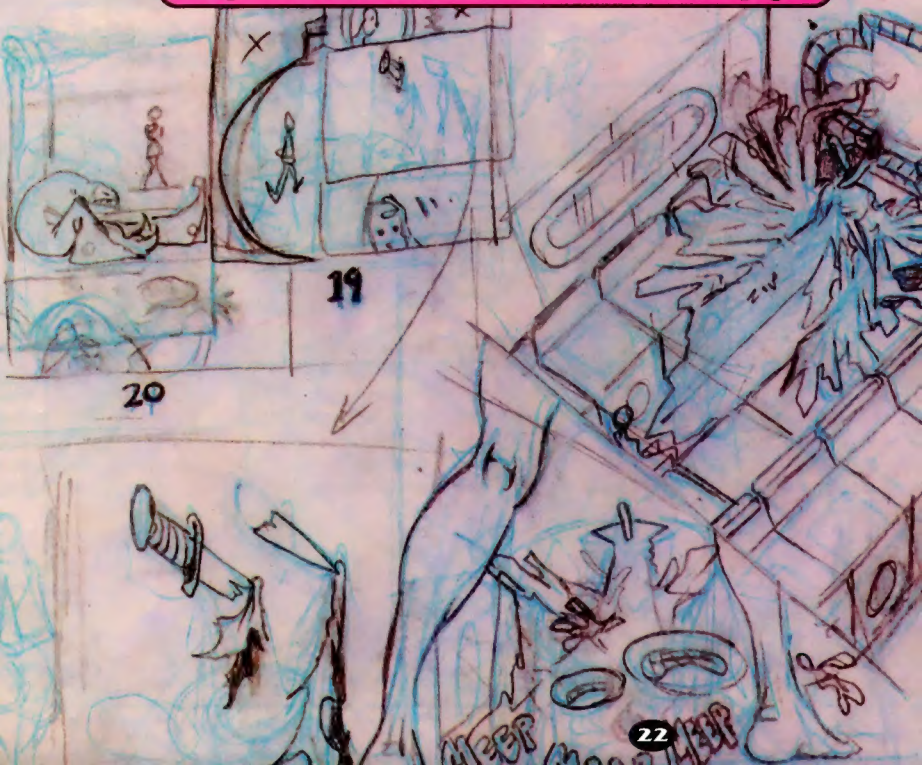
**He also had to
get over a
major drooling
problem.**





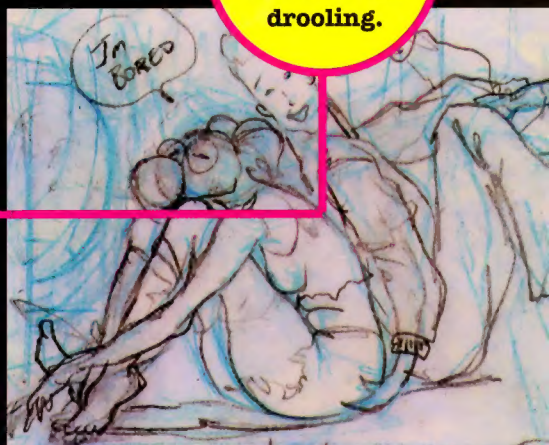
Early sketches and layouts of the Laundromat scene with Glorie and Mr. Gone.

Compare them to the final versions on the next page...





Maxx later
loses the cap
and goggles,
but he's still
drooling.



Image

4
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\$1.95
\$2.45
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HERE I STOOD
ALL BROKEN
HEARTED TRIED
TO

RETAINING WALL
SALT MARSH